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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/869,883	08/17/2001	Hiroko Shikinami	110071	4388
25944	7590	10/12/2004	EXAMINER	
OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC P.O. BOX 19928 ALEXANDRIA, VA 22320			ROYAL, PAUL	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3611	

DATE MAILED: 10/12/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/869,883	SHIKINAMI ET AL.	
	Examiner Paul Royal	Art Unit 3611	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 July 2004.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-3,5 and 10-12 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 10 and 11 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-3 and 12 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 5 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 17 August 2001 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. The amendments filed 25 June 2004 and 22 July 2004 have been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-3 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Austin (US 5,380,262)

Duke teaches a walker device comprising a frame (12,14) extending around a body of a user of the device to support the user, wheels (36,37) mounted on the frame and a seat plate (50), attached to a lower frame (62), the seat plate comprising a pair of seat plate portions (56,58) wherein the seat plate portions are projectable from each side of the user to an area where legs of a walking user move and wherein the seat plate portions are removable from the users leg area during walking;

wherein the seat plate (50) can be pivoted about a horizontal axis.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claim 5 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: the prior art does not show a vehicle as claimed in the independent claim and as applicable to the dependent claims which includes wherein the seat plate is projectable from around the later and rear side of the user to the area where the legs of the walking user moves.

4. Claims 10 and 11 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

For claim 10, the prior art does not show a vehicle as claimed in the independent claim and as applicable to the dependent claims which includes means for braking movement of the vehicle as recited and as operable, specifically, wherein a braking frame is disengaged from an engagement plate to move the braking frame downwardly by gravity and the biasing force of a spring to contact the lower end of the braking frame to the ground.

For claim 10, the prior art does not show a vehicle as claimed in the independent claim and as applicable to the dependent claims which includes at least one vertically extending handle, the handle pivotal between a vertical and horizontal position such that when extends horizontally, the handle extends

behind the user of the vehicle such that the user can user the handle as a backrest.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-3 and have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection as necessitated by applicant's amendments.

Applicant's arguments with respect to the prior art Austin (5,380,262) that Austin teaches away from seat plate portions that are removed from the area where the legs of the walking user move when the user walks using the vehicle, and that more specifically, the configuration of Austin teaches away from a seat plate that is pivotable about a predetermined axis wherein the seat plate is projected to an area where the legs of the walking user mover by pivoting the seat plate, as recited in claim 2", is not persuasive because the seat of Austin is pivotable away from the user, see column 5, line 54, to column 6, line 2.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

6. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**.

See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul Royal whose telephone number is 703-308-8570. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30-4:30.

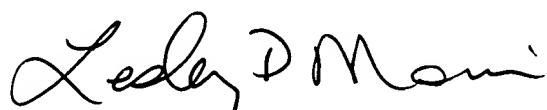
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lesley D. Morris can be reached on 703-308-0629. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



P. Royal
10/4/04

Paul Royal
Examiner
Art Unit 3611



LESLEY D. MORRIS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600